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Undocumented API Youth Stand in Solidarity with NanHui Jo

Priority Enforcement Program (PEP) criminalizes all immigrant communities

San Francisco, CA—NanHui Jo, a devoted Korean mother and a domestic violence survivor who fled from her violent environment and abuser has been convicted on charges of “child abduction” after an aggressive retrial in Yolo County, CA. NanHui is currently being held in custody of Yolo County Jail because of her hold by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP). NanHui is facing the possibility of deportation and permanent separation from her six year old daughter Vitz Da.

ASPIRE, the first undocumented API youth-led group in the country, stands in solidarity with NanHui and demands that ICE and CBP exercise their prosecutorial discretion and drop NanHui’s case.

NanHui is a mother and has been criminalized under the current implementation of President Obama’s Priority Enforcement Program (PEP), which accelerates deportations for those who are targeted by the criminal justice system. The rhetoric behind “felons not families” has created an obscene reality of family separation within all immigrant communities that are susceptible to racial profiling and disproportionate incarceration.

ASPIRE condemns PEP as an extension of the prison-industrial-complex that profits from the detention and deportation of immigrant communities. We stand with all marginalized communities who remain vulnerable to the state-sanctioned violence of prisons and detention centers. We stand with those who remain incarcerated as a result of xenophobic enforcement programs like PEP and racist policing practices, and demand an end to the imprisonment/deportation machine.

ASPIRE members, many who survived the detention and deportation process, will continue to push for an expanded Trust Act in California, a piece of statewide legislation that will curtail the renewed cooperation between local and state enforcement agencies with ICE under PEP.

“Every deportation is unacceptable and it is unjust to tear families apart. It is immoral to tear NanHui away from her daughter when all she wanted was safety and protection. We demand that an end to the immigration enforcement regime that jeopardizes the well-being of all immigrants. We demand justice for NanHui and that she receives prosecutorial discretion!”, says Hong Mei Pang, ASPIRE Community Organizer.

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ASPIRE is the first undocumented API youth-led group in the country. It provides a safe space for undocumented API youth to build community. Through leadership development, ASPIRE members advocate for our community around issues of immigration and social justice as directly impacted people. Our activism has halted deportations and spawned positive changes for immigrants from the local to national levels.